

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended) A method for fingerprint authentication comprising ~~the steps~~ of:

- a) acquiring an image of a fingertip of an individual;
- b) processing the image to determine a value indicative of a [[predetermined acquisition]] physical parameter [[thereof]] of the fingertip, the physical parameter affecting the acquired image and independent of the identity of the individual;
- c) comparing the image to a stored biometric template, the comparison process based on the determined value; and,
- d) performing one of an authentication and a rejection in dependence upon the comparison.

Claim 2 (original) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 1 wherein the comparison process is selected based on the determined value, the comparison process involving different image processing steps for different determined values.

Claim 3 (original) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 2 wherein the determined value is quantitatively indicative of the predetermined acquisition parameter.

Claim 4 (original) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 3 wherein the predetermined acquisition parameter is selected from a group comprising: a moisture condition of the fingertip; and, an applied pressure of the fingertip.

Claim 5 (original) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 4 wherein the comparison process uses a biometric template selected in dependence upon the determined value, different biometric templates selected for different determined values.

Claim 6 (original) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 1 wherein the comparison process uses a biometric template selected in dependence upon the determined value, different biometric templates selected for different determined values.

Claim 7 (currently amended) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 5 wherein the comparison process includes ~~the steps of~~:

- c1) selecting an image-processing process in dependence upon the determined value;
- c2) according to the selected image-processing process, processing the image to remove a subset of features contained therein; and,
- c3) comparing the processed image to the selected biometric template,

wherein the biometric template is processed according to a same selected image-processing process prior to being selected for comparison.

Claim 8 (currently amended) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 5 wherein the comparison process includes ~~the steps of~~:

- c1) selecting an image-processing process in dependence upon the determined value;
- c2) according to the selected image-processing process, processing the image to remove a subset of features contained therein;
- c3) according to the selected image-processing process, processing the selected biometric template to remove a subset of features contained therein; and,
- c4) comparing the processed image to the processed selected biometric template.

Claim 9 (original) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 5 wherein the biometric template is selected from a plurality of biometric templates, each biometric

template of the plurality of biometric templates stored in association with a moisture condition of the fingertip.

Claim 10 (original) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 5 wherein the biometric template is selected from a plurality of biometric templates, each biometric template of the plurality of biometric templates stored in association with an applied pressure of the fingertip.

Claim 11 (currently amended) A method for processing a fingerprint image comprising ~~the steps of:~~

- a) acquiring an image of a fingertip of an individual;
- b) processing the acquired image to determine a value indicative of a [[predetermined acquisition]] physical parameter [[thereof]] of the fingertip, the physical parameter affecting the acquired image and independent of the identity of the individual; and,
- c) selecting an image-processing process in dependence upon the determined value, the image-processing process for removing a subset of features of the acquired image.

Claim 12 (currently amended) A method for processing a fingerprint image according to claim 11 wherein the [[predetermined acquisition]] physical parameter is selected from a group comprising: a moisture condition of the fingertip; and, an applied pressure of the fingertip.

Claim 13 (currently amended) A method for fingerprint authentication comprising ~~the steps of:~~

- a) acquiring an image of a fingertip of an individual;
- b) processing the image to determine a value indicative of a [[predetermined acquisition]] physical parameter [[thereof]] of the fingertip, the physical

parameter affecting the acquired image and independent of the identity of the individual;

- c) processing the acquired image according to a predetermined image-processing process to remove a subset of features from the acquired image;
- d) selecting a biometric template in dependence upon the determined value, the biometric template processed according to the predetermined image-processing process;
- e) comparing the processed acquired image to the biometric template; and,
- f) performing one of an authentication and a rejection in dependence upon the comparison.

Claim 14 (current amended) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 13 including ~~the step~~ prior to step a) of:

providing a plurality of biometric template images of a same fingertip, each biometric template image associated with a different predetermined ~~acquisition~~ physical parameter of a specific fingertip, the physical parameter affecting the acquired image and independent of the identity of the individual, wherein each biometric template image is processed according to the predetermined image-processing process.

Claim 15 (currently amended) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 14 wherein the ~~predetermined acquisition~~ determined physical parameter is a moisture condition of the fingertip.

Claim 16 (currently amended) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 15 wherein ~~the step of~~ providing a plurality of biometric template images of a same fingertip includes ~~the step of~~ repeating for each predetermined moisture condition ~~the steps of~~:

- conditioning the fingertip to be in the predetermined moisture condition;
- placing the conditioned fingertip onto a sensing surface; and,

capturing an image of the conditioned fingertip.

Claim 17 (currently amended) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 14 wherein the first predetermined acquisition determined physical parameter is an applied pressure of the fingertip.

Claim 18 (currently amended) A method for fingerprint authentication according to claim 17 wherein ~~the step of~~ providing a plurality of biometric template images of a same fingertip includes ~~the step of~~ repeating for each predetermined applied pressure ~~the steps of~~:

placing the fingertip onto a sensing surface using the predetermined applied pressure; and,
capturing an image of the fingertip.

Claim 19 (currently amended) A system for fingerprint authentication comprising:
a sensing area for capturing an image of a fingertip of an individual presented thereto;
a memory storage area for storing captured images therein; and,
a processor for executing code thereon to process the captured image to determine a value indicative of ~~[[an acquisition]]~~ a physical parameter, ~~[[thereof]]~~ the physical parameter affecting the acquired image and independent of the identity of the individual, and to compare the captured image to a template image according to an image-processing process selected in dependence upon the determined value.

Claim 20 (withdrawn)